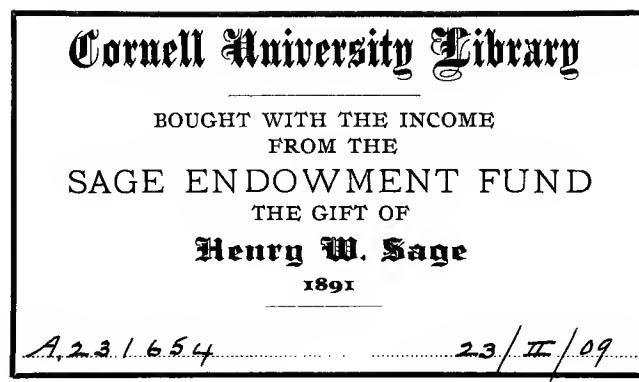


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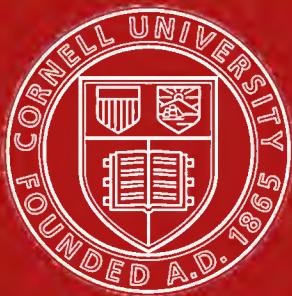


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Of gentleness and nobility



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The Tudor Facsimile Texts

Of Gentleness and Nobility

[By JOHN HEYWOOD?]

Date of only known Edition, 1535?

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Gentleness and Nobility

The Tudor Facsimile Texts

Under the Supervision and Editorship of
JOHN S. FARMER

Of Gentleness and R^obility

[By JOHN HEYWOOD ?]

[1535?]

Issued for Subscribers by
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Of Gentleness and Nobility

[By JOHN HEYWOOD?]

It is a matter of uncertainty, more than doubtful indeed according to some authorities, as to whether this dialogue can rightly be attributed to John Heywood. It must at present suffice to say that recently discovered documents and facts tend somewhat to strengthen the supposition in favour of the attributed authorship, and to lessen the weight of the arguments drawn from differences of style and the like. John Heywood was a far more versatile man and of superior social standing than has been generally supposed (see “The Four PP”).

The example from which this facsimile is taken is in the British Museum (Press-mark C. 40, i. 16), and the Catalogue says “(The Philosopher) [By J. Heywood?] . . . [London 1535].” Another copy is in the Bodleian (Ashmole) Library.

The portrait of John Heywood is pasted on a blank fly-leaf opposite the title-page of the original.

Mr. J. A. Herbert, of the Manuscript Department of the British Museum, after comparing this facsimile with the original copy, says, “The reproduction is exceedingly good but for one fault in printing, viz., excess of heaviness and ‘muzziness.’ This nowhere amounts to actual misrepresentation even of a single letter, so far as I could see, but it does less than justice to the usually clear and good printing of original.”

JOHN S. FARMER.



¶ Of Gentylnes and Noblyte.

A dyaloge betwen the Marchant the
Knyght and the plowman dysputyng who is a verey Gen-
tylman & who is a Noble man and how men shuld
come to auttorite / complid in maner of an en-
teclude with divers toys & gestis addyd thereto
to make mery pastyme and disport.



The marchaunt

O what a gret welth and prosperyte
It is to any reme where marchautes be
Having fre lyberte and entercours also
All marchaundysle to couey to and fro
Whch thyng I haue bled and the verey set found
And theraby gotton many a thousand pownd
Wherfore now be cause of my grete ryches
Thoroughout this land in every place doubtles
I am magnysyed and gretly regardyd
And for a wyle and noble man esteemed

The knyght

Master marchaunt I here you ryght well
But now in presumption me thynk ye excell
To call yourself noble in presence here
I wys men know what your auncestours were
And of what grete stock descendid ye be
Your fadyr was but a blacke smyth perde

March.
Knyght
M

¶ Whysyr what than what be you I pray you
¶ Mary I am a gentylman I wold ye know
And may dispend verey v. C. mark land
And I am sure all that ye haue in hand
Of verey rent is not worth v. markys
¶ But I wold thou knewist for all thy krakkys
I am able to bye now all the land
That thou hast and pay for it out of hand

A. i.



Whiche I haue got by myn own labour and wit
¶ Bet art thou but a chorle and I haue a skorn
Thou shuldist compare with me a gentylman born
¶ Why what callyst thou a gentylman tel me
¶ Mary I call them gentylmen that be
Born to grete landys by inheritaunce
As myn auncestours by cōtynaunce
Haue had this b. C. pere of whom now I
Am desendid and commyn lyngally
Beryng the same name and armys also
That they bare this b. C. pere agoo
Myng auncestours also haue euer be
Lordys knyghtes and in grete austoryte
Capteyns in the warr and gouerners
And also in tyme of peale gret rulers
And thyn were neuer but arctyscys
As smythe masone carpentars or weuars
¶ All that is trewh I wyl not denye now
Bet I am more gentylman born than thou
For I call hym a gentylman that gentilly
Doth gyf unto other men louyngly
Such thing as he hath of hys own pper
But he that takith ought away from a nother
And doth gyf hym no thyng agayn therfore
Ought to be callyd a chorle euermore
But myn auncestours haue giffyn alwy
To thyn auncestours such thyng as they
By their labours did trewly get and wyn
For myn auncestours bldid holsis wherin
Thyne auncestours haue had their dwellyng place
Also myn auncestours haue made tolis
To all maner crafti men belongyng
Wherby clothis and eury other thyng
Wherof thyn auncestours nedē haue had
With the same tolys haue euer be made
So myn auncestours haue giffyn their labours
Euer to confort and help thyn auncestours
¶ I deny that euer thauncestours of thyne
Did euer gif to the auncestours of myne
At any tyme any thyng except that they
Gave some what therfor other waxe or money
¶ Mary god a meray John for that now
That is eyn a ppg of our own sow

How can lordys & estatis haue ought in store
Except thartyscres do get it before
For all metalls be dyggyd furst by mynres
And after wrought by the artyscres
Woll scell and euery other thyng
That is necessary to manrys coueryng
And all other thyngis that men vse & were
Is al wryt made by the artyscer
I graunt that the artyscres do make it
But be cause comenly they haue lytell wryt
Gentylinen that haue landys & domynyon
Of all such rythes haue most possesyon
For reason wyl euer it shuld so be
Wyle men to haue folys in captywte
Myne auncestours wryth thine may make expisyon
For though my fader were a lynyng what than
yet was he a meruelous quys wyttyd man
And coud work as well for hys ge
As any in this land vsing that art
And deuyse new fallysons in thynges that he made
That euer man to bye hys ware was glas
And carue & graue in yron & lele
Both Image & letters meruelously wicle
And ther on ley gold & gyld it also
Syne & pure as any gold lynyng coud do
My grauncader also was a walson
Of grete wryt as any in thys regyon
And coud byld a castell & tour ryght wel
In whiche some of thy kynnylinen now do dwel
Where in aper yth ryght good masonry
Wryth tunnagys & tariynys wrought curiously
My grete graundfader lo was a weuer
Of wollyn yarn & of other gere
And made meruelous pleasaune workis to be hold
Lynew dyap sylk & cloth of gold
All such subtell thyngis as I haue rehersyd lo.
Myne auncestours by theyr wytis coud work & do
And as for myne auncestours I know no thyng
Thei coud do bi theire wittis worth of praisyng
But vle occupi & wast euer more
Such thyngis as myn auncestours made before
And thou & thie auncestours hauig thoccupacion
Of such thingis wrought bi the opacion

Of other men oughtist not be praysed therfore
But the prayse ought to be gauen euer more
To the artysycer whiche by hys wyt
It deuylyd and so conyngly brought it
wherefore yf thou say that wyt is poleys
Be the thyng perteynyng to gentry
Thyn auncestours may never comparewyth mine
For theyr acte proue them wiser than thyne
For thyndyd never no thyng in theyr days
Concernyng quyk wyt that was worthy prayrs
yes I wis lewd I auell I wold thou knewist it
Bynauncestours haue had more wisedome & wyt
Than thyne haue had & could do also
Many thynges that thyne could never do
For in the contrey at selysons and sylse
They haue be electe to be Justyce
And for theyer wyt and grete dyscressyon
They haue Juggyd and donne correccyon
Upon thyne auncestours artysykers
That haue made false warys & ben dysseyuers
And holpe for to maynteyn euery thyng
That ys to the couyn welth pteynynge
They haue ben also in tyme of warr
Both in thys land & other courtreys farr
Dukys & leders of the hole army
And by theire wyttis & warly polcy
Study forecast & diligent trauayle
Haue won many a grete syld & batayle
And thyne auncestours that were there
were never able to bere shyld nor spere
And were never but soldyars & pyoners
Nor never had wisedome to be ruleys
But because myn auncestours haue euer be
Dyscrete & wylle they haue had auctorite
Nay nay thyne auncestours cam never all
To auctorite for wisedome pnyppall
For though soe were wise yet some of the agayn
Had small discretion lytyll wyt or brayn
But because of the long cotynuance.
Of theyr grete possessions by enherytaunce
By the folysch maner of the worlde we see
For that cause euer they haue had auctorite
And I say that good reason agreth to it
For though the fader haue no grete wyt

The sone that is wyse shuld never the more
Lose hys land or auctoryte therfore
For he that by study dylygens & payn
Grete landys or possesyonys doth attayn
Hys owne lyfe is to shorte & to lyte
For to take the frute of his inertyte
Reason wolde therfore that after hys lyfe
Hys heyrys before straungers haue progaifyse
And the contynuance of such possesyonys
Makyth noble men & gentyll condycyons
And they whos blode hath long contynued
As gentylmen so they shuld be honoured
And so myn auncestours long tyne haue be
Grete possesyoners and in auctoryte
Therefore consydering my grete lynage
My blode my noble byth and parentage
Thou art not able to compare w me
No other in gentylnes nor in noblyte

Here the plouman comith in with a short
whyp in hys hand & spekyth as folowith

Plow. Nowhere is bybbyll babbyll clytter clatter
I hard never of so folysch a matter
But by goddys body to speke the troth
I am better than other of you bothe
Rauant kankerde chorle fro whens comyst thou
Mary folysch peuysh daw euuen fro my plow
How sayst woldyst any thyng therewall
ye mary thou lewyd byllayn & roud raskall
MIt is for the full yll beleyning
To perturb any gentylmenis talkyng
PGentylmen ye gentylmen tak heryng
Put your shone in your bosome for weryng
I accompt my self by goddys body
Better than you bothe and more worthy
Rauant knaue get the out of the gate
Or I shall lay my sworde on thy pate
That shall I prove I make god auow
Never in better tyme haue at the now

Et verberat eos

MNow holde thy hand felow I the pray
And harkyn what I shall to the say
Sey knaue say what canst say
PHolde thy hand I pray the & com no narr
MI am a marchaunt & no man of warr

R Thou art not honest I tell the playnly
To make any quatrel here so sodaynly
To perturb our comunycacyon
Here ye may se syts by goddys passyon
Two proude folys make a crakkyng
And when it comyth to poynt dare do no thyng
M Our comynghyder & our entent
ys not to fygth but by way of argument
Euery man to shew hys oppinyon
To see who coude shew the best reason
To proue hys self noble & most gentylinan
By god all the reasons lyth ye began
That ye haue made therof be not worth a fly
R **P** **C** No syr I pray the than tell me why
First as touchyng noblenes I say
There is nother of you both dyd pue or lay
Any of your actys wherby that ye
Shulde in reason pue you noble to be
Or therby deserue any maner praysing
But all the effect of your arguyng
To proue your noblenes was but only
Of the deddys & actys of your auncestry
And of the actys that your auncestours dyd before
ye ar the nobler never the more
R **C** As touchyng my self I dare make compisyon
Of as noble deddys as he hath any done
For I am & haue ben one of the cheualry
At the comauement of my prynce euer redy
And every tyne of warre haue be captayn
And leder of a .M. men or twayne
And whors & hartes spere and sheld
Haue I opdyd my body in eucry felde
The rentys of my landys haue spende lyberally
And kept a gret house contynually
And holp to ponysh theups & brybers alwey
To the grete tranquylite of my contray
And you maister marchaunt wyl never take labour
Except it be for your pffet and lucoure
Plow. Go to go to now maister marchaunt
There is a reason that gyuyth you a taunt
I trou more than you can answe well
Say I wps pyuyls & rude Tak Iauell
I can make an answe so substancialy
wher to nother of you is able to reply

If thou canst answe my reason do
That can I well doo. P. Then go to sole go to
I say the comyn wel of euery land
In fete of marchauntysc doth pryncipally stand
For if oure comodites be vteryd for nougyn
In to strange landis and no ryches brought
By dyng therfore / we shuld come to beggaiy
And all men dryfyn to lys in mystry
The we noble in chauntis that in this reame be
what a grete welth to thys land do we
we vter our warys & by theyrs good chepe
And bryng them hyder that grete pffet
And pleasure dayly comyth to this regyon
To all maner people that here do won
Fortherinore ye see well w youte eyes
That of strayne landis the comodites
we haue such nede of them that be there
That in no wylc we may them for bere
As oyle sylkis frutis & spycis also
Golde syluer yryn & other metallis moe
All drāuys & druggys longyng to physyke
whych men must nedes haue when they be seke
whych in thys reame can not well grow
Dur cōtrey is to colde & not hote I now
Without whych thynge we shulde lyfe in mystry
And oft tymes for lack of them we shulde dye
And I spende my studi & labour contynually
And cause such thyngeis to come hyder dayly
For the comfort of thys land & eōmen welth
And to all the people grete pffet & helth
And for such noble dedys reason wyl than
That I ought to be calyd a noble man
And nother of you both that here now be
In noblenes may accompare w me
Now well hit by goddes body well hit
Of one that hath but lyttyll wyt
Answe me one wordc furst I pxpy the
what is the noblest thyng that can be
what saist thou thereto thi self let see
Is not þ the noblyst thyng in dcde
That of all other thyngis hath leſt nede
As god which reynith etern in blyſſe
Is not he the nobleſt thyng yis
yes mary no man in reason can that deny

P

Well than there is no reason therof why
But because he is the thyng omnipotent
And is in him self so suffycyent
And nedith the helpe of no nothyr thyng
To the helpe of hys gloryous beryng
But euery other thyng hath nedē of his ayde
Mary that is very troughe & well sayde
And lykwyse þ thyngē that hath most nedē
Is the thyng that is most wretched
So suffycency is euer noblenes
And necessite is euer wretchednes
And he that hath more nedē of that thyng
For the p̄seruacyon of hys lyuynge
Then his felow hath his felow must nedē be
By thys same reason more noble than he
what than. P. by the same reason it p̄uith lo
ye be but caytyf & wretchedis both two
And by the same reason pue I shall
That I am the noblyst man of vs all
For I haue nedē of no maner thyng
That ye can do to help of my lyffyng
For euery thyng whereby ye do lyf
I noryssh it & to you both do gyf
I plow I tyll & I ster the ground
wherby I make the corn to habounde
whereof ther is made both drynk & bred
wyth the which dayly ye must nedis be fed
I noryssh the catell & sowlys also
Fyssh & herbis & other thyngis mo
Fell herre & woll which the bestis do bere
I noryssh & preserue which ye do wre
which þf ye had not no dowlt ye shuld
Starue for lak of clothis because of colde
So both you shulde die or lyue in necessite
If ye had not cōfort & help of me
And as for your fyne cloth & costly array
I cannot see whi ye ought or mai
Call your self noble because ye were it
which was made bi other menis labour & wit
And also your delicate drinkis & bland
Bi other menis labours be made so pleasand
Therefore mayster marchaunt now to you I sei
I can not see but I am able & mai
Lyf wythout you or your p̄tureaunce

M
P

R

Lyue wythout you or your purveyaunce
For of fode & cloth I haue suffisaunce
Of my self for lyfing necessary
And now sir knyght to you I say playnly
I see not that ye can any thyng do
For the comyn well or ought longyng ther to
But ech man beyng in auctorite
Hauyng wit may do it as well as ye
Therefore to spek now of necessite
There is nothe of you both but ye be
In more nede than I therfore I say playnly
I am more noble than other of you twayn
Now that is a soyllyng reaon so god me sauue
For by the same reaon thou woldyst haue
Eueri best fyslyng & other foule than
To be more noble of birth than a man
For man hath more nede of bodily coueryng
Than they haue for they ne de no thinge
The best haue hert & alio a thik skin
The fyslyng & shelis to kepe theyn bodyes in
The foulis fethrys & so eueri thing
By nature hath his pper coueryng
Sawe man hym self which is born all nakyd
And therfore he shuld be than most wretched
Cary no man can make a better reason
For that is a sure & a trew conculyon
For if a child when he is fyrst born
were not holp & coueryd he were lone lorn
He hath no strenght to help hym neuer a dell
yet bestis haue power to help them self well
C So consideryng mans body in dede
A best is moze noble & man moze wretched
Be cause he hath nede of many mo thyngis
Than bestis haue to help of theyer lyfthyngis
Also man must dayly labour & swete
To get hym lustynaunce as drynk & mete
The groud he must dyg & the bestis kyll
For bide and mete his bodi to fyll
Grapis frutis and herbis noylly dyligently
To make good drynkis to refrelysh his body
But all brut bestis haue coueryng natural
Sufcyent to couer their bodyes with all
And lynd theyr fode euer on the groud redy
Without any payn labouz or studi

So euery man by reason of hys body
Is more wretched & in more mytery
Than bests be / yet this not wrytstandyng
Man is most noble of creature lyuyng
Not by hys body for that is impotent
But by hys soule beyng so excellent
For by reason of hys soule intellec^tync
He surpasseþ all other bests alyue
And cōpellyth all other bestis that be
By hys wit to releue his necessyte
But bestis haue no wyt them self to defende
Nor can get no more than god hath them send
For take any best that weryth heer
And do clyp it of bare a gayns wyrter
That best hath no maner of polecy
To get other coueryng for hys body
Of cloth nor skyns nor hath no wyt
To put it vpon hym thaugh one haue made it
Nor can byld no house nor kyndyl no fyre
To warme hys body yf nede shuld requyre
But yet a man hath wyt & vnderstanding
For to help hym self in euery such thyng
So man for his soule intellec^tuall
Is most noble creature of bestis all
¶ That is a verey g^roud & preguant reason
yet me thynkith thou makist a degression
From the argument that we furst began
which was to pue who was most gentylman
whych we disputyd I wold thou haddist hard it
¶ C^rulsh I hard what ye sayd eueri whit
¶ Then shew thy reason therin or thou go
¶ May be god I haue some what ells to do
I must go by me a halþorth of gresse
The spokes of my cart therwith to dresse
¶ C^row ye that I wyll leue my bysynes
For your babilyng poimp & folysshnes
¶ May by sent mary I wyll not do so
For I can now to the merket goo
And for an halpeny as much gresse by
As shall cost me in our town a peny
And I tell the playnly w^out any bost
A halpeny is as well lauid as lost
¶ C^raw for an halpeny therin is no w^ost
Cary with vs a while phappys thou m^ost

29

¶
¶
¶

¶

P

By our acquayntaunce now here get more
Than thou gatist with thy cart this monyth before
¶ Straw for thi councell torde a fart
Crowist I wyll gyf up my plow or cart
And folow thy folish appityte and mynde
May I am not yet so mad nor so blynd
For when I am at my cart or plow
I am more meyner than other of you
I wold not chaunge my lys nor my lyffyng
For to be made a grete lorde or a kyng
There is no ioy nor pleasure in this world here
But hyll bely fyll and make good therre
Be it prynce lorde gentilman or knaue
Hlt is all the ioy that here he can haue
But these couetous and ambitious wretches
They set there myndys in honoure and ryches
So much that they be neuer content
So they lys euer in payn and torment
But a man that can this meanys fynd
To haue fode and cloth and a mery mynde
And to desyre no more than is nedefull
That is in this worlde the lys most ioyfull
Whiche lyfe in this worlde no man shall acquire
Till he subdew his insaciat desyre

M

¶ I see well thou has a curst appish wit
Then yf thou wylt depart I pray the yet
Come agayn when thy bilities is doo
¶ For what intent now shuld I do so
¶ For we will in owe olde argument pro sede
Who shulde be calyd a gentylman in dede
And we wolde be glade to here thy reason
¶ I wyll come agayn uppon a condiccion
That ye wyll wayt uppon me both twayn
And be not out of the way when I come agayn
¶ We wyll not be farr hens P. then I wil not sayle
¶ Then I pray the let not thi pmise quasle
¶ Lo here is my synger now trust me well
I will come agayn yf I haue my hele
For by god I promyse you one thyng
I am as trew of my worlde as the kyng
But if I fynde you not here then by my trough
I shall call you oppenly false knaups both
¶ Thou shalt fynde us trew in euery thyng
¶ I thynk so / except lyeng and stelyng

R Then far well for a season a dew
Then fare ye well both I dare say as truw
As some that be tyede in newgate
M well now he is gone god speed well his gate
But what shall we do now the meane season
R Let us take now some recreacyon
And come agayn here and keep our poynement
M Now thereto I am ryght well content
And in the meayn wyle good lord of thy grace
Preserue all the people here in this place
Amen

Finis prime partis

C Secunda pars
The Plouman

P Here I may walk and wander to and fro
But I se not them whych I wold speke to
M Yes by rode here we be both twayn
To whom thou dydyss promys to mete here agayn
To dyspute the questyon that we began
whych of us coud proue hym most gentylman
R Thou leydest thou hardyss our argumentes all
so dyd I nother good nor substanciall
P For thy folysch and pyuysh oppynyon
was because of the grete domynyon
Of the landis and rentis wher to thou walt boore
whych thyn auncelours had long tyme before
Thou thyngyst thy self a gentylman to be
Ant that is a folysch reason semyth ne
For when adam dolf and eue span
who was then a gentylman
But then cam the chyrl and gederyd good
And ther began fursl the gentyll blood
And I thynk verely ye do beleue
That we cam all of adam and eue
Then to speke by reason grete possessions
Make no gentylmen but gentyl condycyons
That is the cause and best reason why
One shuld be callyd a gentylman truly
And fortheymor mark well this reason then
If a manis auncelours haue be gentylmen
And vereteous and good to commyn well
That ought to be reputyd never adell
To the prayse of the chylde whych doth refuse

Such good cōdycyons & the cōtrary vse
But he ought to be dyspraylyd the more
Because hys auncestours hath shewid hym before
A precedent of gentylnes & vertew
Wh̄ch good example he dothe not insew
For the gentylnes of hys blode clery
In hym doth decay & vtterly dye
So he that vlyth cōdycyons verteous
Though that hys auncestours were vycyous
Dught not to be dyspraylyd therfore
But ought to be honoryd & praylyd the more
yet me thynkyth more honoꝝ shulde be gyflyn
To hym wh̄ch ys of noble blood & kyn
Then yf thou wylt loke honoured to be
Be cause of thy blod then mark well & see
The vlyst beggar that goth by the dore
Had ye not both one god & creature
ye cam of one furst stok & pgenye
Both of adam & eue ye wyll not denye
The beggar & thou wer both dowlies
Lounseyyd & born infylth & vnclemnes
Thy blood & the beggars of one colour be
Thou art as apt to take seknes as he
yf thou be in the body woundyd
Thy flesh is as yll as his to be helyd
A las I haue knowen many oꝝ thys
So proud of theyr byrth that all theyrllyssys
wold gyf them to no labour nor letayng
wh̄ch brought them to myserable endyng
That in pouerte wrechydly dyd dye
Or fallyn to theft & hangyd therfore full hye
So I sey vertew & good cōdycyons than
Is that wh̄ch makyth the very gentylman
And though the fadyr may bequeth to hys son
Hys ryches hys land & hys possesyon
yet may he nothyr gyf nor bequeth
Unto hym in no wyse after hys deth
Hys vertew nor hys gentyl cōdycyons
They can not descend as other possesyonys
And yf thou wylt be a gentylman nedys
Thou must than vse vertew & gentyll dedys
Wh̄y desyre men then prayse euermore
Of the actis of theyr auncestours done before
One cause ther of ys for lak of lernyng

W.L.

They pseyue not the reasor of ihc thyng
A nother is be cause ther be many
That call them self gentylmen vnworthy
whych lyse voluptuously & bestyall
And do no good in the world at all
But lyse in pryde slouth & vntheyfynes
And be cause they haue no maner goodnes
Nor pperce nor vertew in them wher by
Any man shulde thynk them any prayse worthy
Therefore they leke for comendacyon
Of the act that theyr auncestours haue done
Then I meruell men desyre to be callyd
Of the blode of them that excellyd
In worldly honour as kyngs & empours
where some were tyrant^t some were cōquerours
And few desyre to be callyd of thei^r blod
whych haue ben callyd Just me verteous & good
And blyd indyfferent Justyce & equyte
Mekenes abstynens o^r wylfull pouerte
yf I shuld tell the the betey cause trew
It is because they loue no such vertew
whych vertew & gentyll cōdycyons shuld be
Longyng to gentylmen of pperce
If gentyl cōdycyons be the cause lo
Then wyl I compare with both you two
For I haue blyd euer gentyll maner
And so haue myn auncestours that before were
For furst o^r all when thy^r worlde began
Long after ther were but few people than
Men had suffycyent of euery thyng
wyth oute gret labour for fode & clothyng
All thyng was in comyn among them doutles
But after warde when people dyd increse
Ich man to increse hys pleasure & volupte
Of good^s & landes desyryd pperce
were of grete stryf & debate dyd aryse
The such as wile auncestours were that were wylle
Did studi to make laws how the people myght be
Lyf syng to gedyr in peale & vnyte
And agayns enemys alwey defendyd
The people that tyllyd the ground & laboryd
The people pseyuyngh than theyr goodnes
Theyr gret wyt dyscressyon & gentylnes
were idtent to gyse them pt of the pffet

Comyng of theyr landis whych they dyd get
As corn catell & such thyngs as they wan
But after when that coyn of money began
They chaungid those reuenuse & were content
To gyfe theim in money an anyell rent
So for theyr good & vertuous codycyons
They cam furst to lādl & posseslyons
So posseslyons began & were furst found
Upon a good & resonable ground
By goggis swete body thou lyest falsely
All posseslyons began furst of tyranny
For when people began furst to encrese
Sone gafe them self all to Idylnes
And wold not labour but take by vvolence
That other men gan by labour & dylygence
Than they that labouryd were fayne to gyfe
Them pt of theyr gettings in peas to lyfe
Or ell for theyl landis in money a porcyon
So posseslyons began by extorcyon
And when such extorsyoners had oppreslyd
The labouryng people than they orveynyd
And made laws inruelous strayte & hard
That theyr heyris myght injoy it afterward
So the law of inheritaunce was furst begon
whych is a thyng agayns all good reason
That any inheritaunce in the world shuld be
That is a shamefull opynyon leynyng
For when I haue labouryd & by grete study
Gat & purcheslyd landys truly
It is good reason that I haue lyberte
To gyfe thole landis to whom it lyketh me
Or ell to let them descendlyngally
To my chyld or cosyn of my blod most nye
For inheritaunce must nedys be a good thyng
Because so much good therof is pcedyng
Euery man to hys blod such loue doth bcre
Because the land shall descend to hys heyre
He wyll byld theron & the land improw
And make corn & grasse to encrese & grow
Graft frute set trees & norwysh tymber
And to intresse fysch make pondys wyth water
Stok busshis & wedes whych dystroy herbage
And all baren ground bryng to tyllage
And amend the hye wayes that be ther about

B.ij.

And do many other good dedis no dowt
For the p[er]fet of hys heyr[ps] that shalbe
And for the comyn welth of his countre
which thyng[?] surely he wold never intend
yf the land shuld not to hys heyre descend
By thy reason no nothyr thyng is ment
But a good dede vpon an yuell intent
when men for loue o[ur] pryd do such good dedis
The dyuell therfore shall quyt the[ir] medys
whyder god or the deuyll quyt them therfore
Is now to our purpose never the more
For theyr mynd[?] & intent[?] no man can tell
But touchyng in herytaunce thys I wot well
Much good comyth therof & dayli doth grow
May mych ill comyth therof I shall prove how
For these men that be of gret possesyonis
Unto theyr blod haue such affeccyonis
yf any land lyke them that lyeth nye them
Of theyr pore neghbors they wyl destroy them
Or by extort meanys they wyl them compell
The land for half the worth to them to sell
And when they take inoney they wyl alwey
Ever borow & never wyllyng to pay
And when they shall dye ye see therpiere
Few of them haue remors of cosyng
To make any maner restytucion
Of any land so wrongfully gotton
Thou hast spoke sore agayns gentylmen
But what seyst thou of marchaund[?] then
Many be good and worshipful also
And many charitable dedis they do
Wyld churchys & amend the hye ways
Make almyshowlys & help many decays
But soine be couetous & full falsely
Get theyr goodis by dysleyst & blutry
And when they haue a. M. li. in theyr cosers
They wyl rachyt suffer theyr neyghbors
To sterue for hunger & cold & to dye
Or they wyl gyse to help them a peny
And yet more ouer when any of them be
Promotyd to rule o[ur] auctorite
They dysdayn all lernyng law & reason
And Jugge all by wyl & affeccyon
Thou art but a rayler to speke so sore

Agayne gentylmen & marchaunt^c euermore
Be not plowmen & other that dryfe the cart
And such rusticall felows as thou art
Fals shrews & lyfe as vycouly also
As gentylmen of land^c & marchaunt^c do
yes this blylyn carters almost echon
Haue nother coscyns nor deuocyon
For brybe & stèle every thyng they wyl
If they may secretly come theruntyl
And as for prayer & dyuyne seruyce
They loue them in no maner wyle
Nor neynt wolde labour nor work do
If nede of lyffyng drote them not thereto
yet gentylmen & the rygh marchaunt^c that be
Use mych more vyce & iniquyte
why thynkyst all marchaunt^c & gentylmen nought
May I say not so that is not my thought
I am not yet so folysch nor so mad
For I know many good though some be bad
yet some wyl suffer hys detyl vnpayd to be
And dye and leopd hys soule rather than he
wyll any of hys land^c mynysh and empayre
That shuld after hys detyl come to hys heyre
And some of them so proud be of theyre blod
And vse sinall vertew and doo lylyll good
But gyfe al theyre myndys and theyre study
To oppreie the pore people by tyrrany
And soure of them thynk thys for a iurete
It is the most honour to them that can be
To be able for to doo extorcyon
And to myntayn it wythout punycyon
Bi goggys swet bodi thou art a stark knaue
Nobie men and gentylmen so to depraue
what thou prouehors sole whō dost thou knaue
I trow thou woldist a good blowe or two haue
wyth a good whypstoke to tech the curtesy
Auant beggerly knaue I the desye
what wylt thou wage battell by & by now
That shall I proue strayght I make god auowe
Et hic verbierat eos

Repe the peace masters hold your hādys for shaine
To make thys besynes ye be gretely to blaine
ye wyll dysturb all thys hole company
May mary it is a cause to make them myry

To walke such a proude foole is but sport & gāe
By cokkys body were not for wordly shame
I wuld cut thy flesh o^r ell^r see thy herte blode
Sir hold your tōg your wordis benothingyng good
we lose here w^t thy s lewyd altercacyon
Mych good pastyme and recreacyon
why what better pastyme her canst thou haue
Then to here one to call an other knaue
And see such a proud foole walkyd w^t a whyp
But I loue it not therfore of felyshyp
Leue thys brablyng and w^t good argument
Crye the matter that is nost cōuenyent
Nay I wyll trye it how so euer he wyll
Be it w^t wordys o^r ded^r I wyll answere hym syl^r
For be god yf he wyll not be cōtent
To be cōcludyd by good arguiment
I wyll cōclud hym one way o^r that I goo
Or I shall pue it on hys pate that shall I doo
Thow spekyst lyk a clerk that hath lyctyll wyt
when a case is put yf he can not soyle it
By no maner reason that he canley
Then wyll he answere hym thys wyle & sey
Beware what ye sey syr now I aduise you
For it is treason o^r heresy that ye spek now
To thentent to rebuke hym opynly
Before the unlemyd people that stand therby
And yf he can no colour of such thyng fynd
Then wyll he vex and chafe in hys mynd
And cast o^r wt some lewd word^r of quarelyng
To torn the hole inatter to chydyng & fyghtyng
And so dost thou now lyke one that were mad
Nay I wold thou knewist thou folyshe lad
I am nother mad nor dronken yet
For myn oppynyon I haue well puyd it
By substancyall reason and arguiment
That enhetytaunce is not conuenyent
And shewyd better reasons than thou canst doo
Nay thy reasons may soone be answered unto
For god defende that estates of enhetytaunce
Shuld be dystroyed for by tha t good ordynaunce
Gentylmen of landes vndoutydly
Byngyng up they^r chyldren full honourably
Soone put to the scole to lerne cōnyng
To instruct the people in vertuous lyuyng

Some made to be actyfe in marcyall dede
Able to defend the land when nede is
And the rustycall people that haue no land
Such thyngs be not able to take in hand
Wherfore yf we shuld dystroy enherytaunce
We shulde dystroy all good rule and ordynaunce
But such men as haue greet rente and lande
And no estate but terme of theire lyuys
And euery thyng theron wyll norysh and saue
For the grete zele & loue that they only haue
To the comyn welth of theyr contrey
And for god sake lo these people be they
That be worthy to haue possesyon
And such people of vertuouse condycyon
And no nother shuld be chosyn gouernours
& thei shuld haue lade to maintain their honours
Terme of theyr lyuys as long as they take payn
For the comyn welth thys is good reason playn
So that noman ought to haue any land
But such as be apt and haue charge in hand
For the comyn welth as pryncys and rulers
Brysshoppes curat prechers and techers
Jugges mynysters and other offycers
That of the comyn welth be executers
And balyant men of the chyualty
That be bounde to defende the people dayly
Such men as be apt to all such thyngs
Shuld haue lande to mayntayne theyr lyffyng
So enherytaunce is not besemyng
To let them haue lande that can do no such thing
Nor I thynk it not resonable nother
One man to lyf bylabour of an nother
For ych man is borne to labour truly
As a byerde is to ffe naturally
Nor a man ought nor to haue such lyberte
To lefe lande to hys chyld wher by that he
Shall lust for to lyfe in slouth & glotony
Compellyd to do nought but lyfe voluptuously
There is alway good remedy for that
That is to compell them to do som what
So that ych man hauyng enherytaunce
Haue some auctorite and gouernaunce
Wherein he shulde take payne and belynes
To constrain hym to eschew Idelnes

¶

Then thys grete mynchef shuld folow of hit
Oft tymes they shuld rule that haue lyttyll wyt
Or disposyd to be proud & couetous
Or to lyfe after theyr lustis voluptuous
which ys such men had auctorite

Many thyngs no doute mys orderyd shuld be
where Justyce shuld be / there wold be tyramy

where peas shuld be warr debat & enuy

So there is no good reason that I can se

To proue that any enherytaunce shuld be

yes that shall I proue by good auctorite

for rede in the byble and thou shalt therin see

God sayd to abraham tibi dabo

Terram hanc et semine tuo

whrych is as much to say to expounde yt trew

I shall gyfe thys land to the and thyn ysew

Here is a good proue that it was goddes wyl.

That Abrahā and his blode shulde contynew styl

As posslyoners and haue the gouernaunce

Of that lande as theyr propye enherytaunce

Thou answyerest me now euen lyke a fole

As some of these fonde clarkes that go to scole

when one putteth to them a subtyll questyon

Of phylozophy to be prouyde by reason

whan they haue all theyr wyttes & reason spende

And can not tell how theyr parte to defende

Than they wyl aledge some auctorite

Of the lawes or elles of deuynite

whiche in no wyls men may denye

And yet ye knowe well that of phylozophy

The prynciples oft contraryant be

Unto the very grounde of deuynite

for the phylozophers agree here vnto

Quod inūdus fuit semper ab eterno

And deuynys quod in principio oīm

Creavit deus terram et celum

But thou dydest promyse openly euen now

Onely by naturall reason to proue how

That enherytaunce ought for to be had

By gogges body syrs I holde you bothe mad

ye be lyke soine waman that I knowe well

when they wolde any matter vnto a man tell

They wyl tell. xx. talys by the way

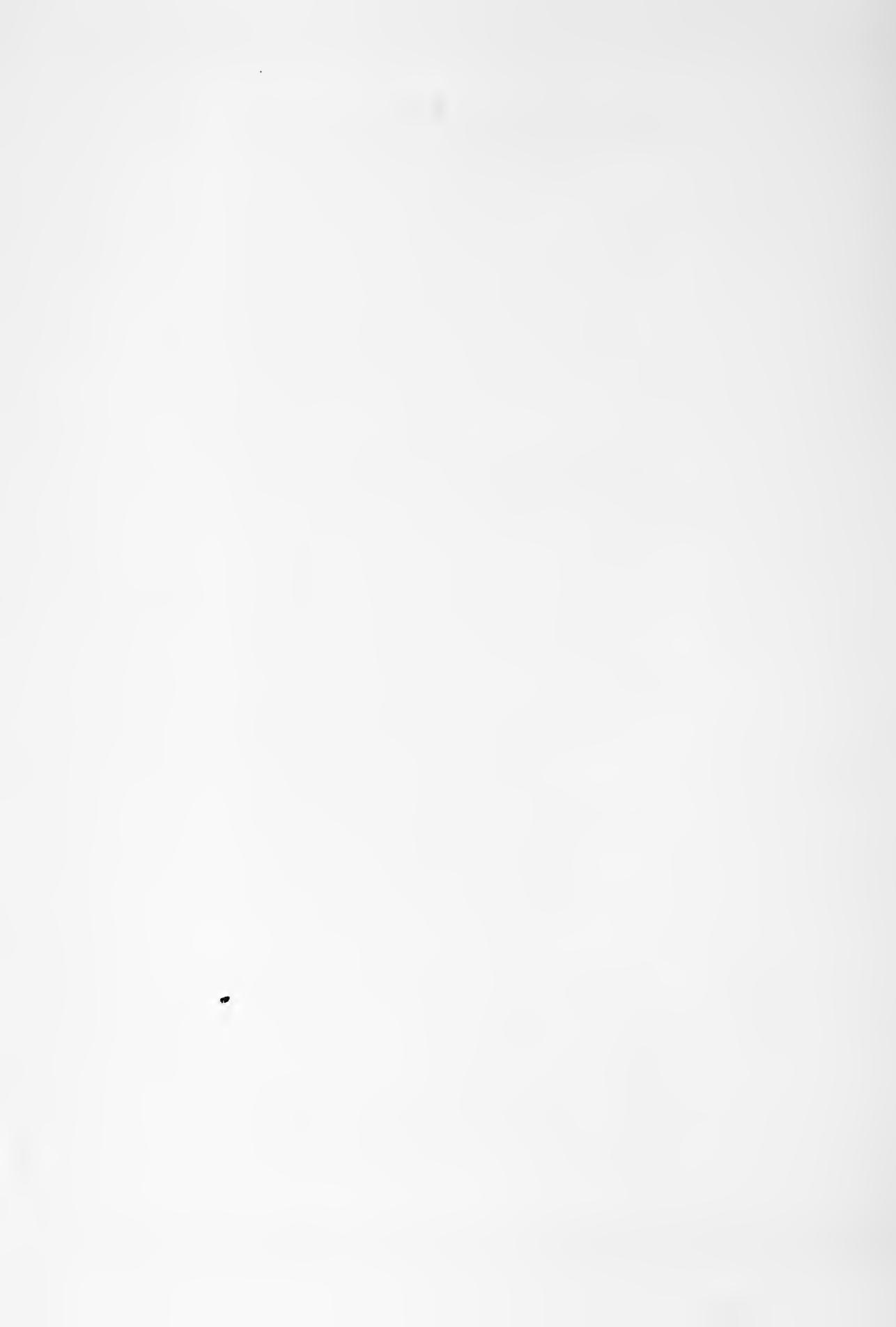
No thyng to purpose to the matter that they

¶

¶

¶





Dyd furst in tend to tell and declare
And in lyke maner now both ye do fare
For ye dyspute now whythe yr enheritaunce
Be a resonable thyng or a good ordynaunce
whych is a matter no thyng pteynynge
To the questyon mouyd at the begynnyng
For the questyon was whych of vs all thre
Loud proue hym selfe most gentylman to be
As touchyng that we haue all spoke & sayd
Ich man for hys pte as much as can be layd
Nay I haue yet reasons last wherby I can
pue my selfe of vs all most gentylman
That nother of you both can voyde by reason
If thou haue ought ell to say now speke on
Then to you both answer me thys short clause
Is not gentyl condycyons the most pricypall cause
To make one to be a gentylman
Paraduenture it may be so what than
paduenture qd a
Nay I shall pue that by examples many on
For unlyke makyngh one a mulcyon
Grainer to be good gramaareon
And also geoimtry a godo geometrycyon
And chorlysh condycyons a chorle for to be
And so of every other estate & degré
And where gentyl condycyons be doutles
In any pson there is gentylnes
Than as verte to makyrh a good man
So gentyl condycyons a gentylman
All those poynct I thynk must nedys grauityd be
what argyest more therol forth let vs see
How feyst than to pteyde wrath & enuy
They be nought & euyll I thynk verely
what is inekenes pacyens & charyte
Everychone a gentyll & good ppte
what is couetous & iyperalyste
The furst good the other nought for surete
what is glotony sloch & lechery
They be nought all who can that deny
what adulstynens good belynes & chalstyte
Vertcous & geni yu ppcerte es they be
Syth ye haue grauity, yd thys I shall proue playn
I am a gentylman so is none of you twayn
Furst for pteyde your raynet iwyth what ye be

L.1.

For ye wyll never be content except that ye
Hauie the fynest cloth & sylke for to were
Of or yent colours & all your geref
So costly your houlys gyld gloriouly
As though ye wold therin your self deyly
ye couet cuerimore good land & rent
what so euer ye get yet never content
wrathfull ye be mournd to anger anon
And enuorous dysdaynyng every man
And as for me I am content alwey
wyth a pore cotage & sympyle aray
I dysdayn no man & yet paciently
Can suffer to be talyd knaue and not angry
Sountryne I call hym knaue agayn in hast
And when I haue sayd my anger is past
ye haue your beddys so pleasaunt & soft
wherein ye easie your self to long and to oft
whych maketh your bodyes so tender to be
That ye can not endure labour lyke me
wyth no maner course fode ye wyll be fede
But wyth pleasant wynys & most whytest brede
wyth flesh & fysh most dyligate & fat
All frut & spycys that can be gat
And when ye haue had luch pleasaunt refecyons
To awage your eare all insurrecyons
what so euer she be wyfe wedow or mayde
If she come in the way she shalbe assayd
Thou liest sladerours chorle for I thik of troth
Thou vlyst lych byse more then we both
May by cokk body I vse no lych lyfe
For I am content wyth blak inaud my wyfe
Crov ye þ I care for these nise proude prynys
These paityd popagars that hold vp their chynne
And loke so sinotely as who say they wold
Haue every man woo them that doth them behold
Cote man for all lych beneteall werk
As good is the foule as the fayre in the derk
Thou sayst trew / drake is good Inough for swyne
yet thou answerest to no reson of myne
Thy reasons all ryght well answere I can
For I say it be cometh a noble man
To haue rych appell & clothyng
And goodly housys of costly byldyng
And that ych man accordyng to hys degre

M

P

R

P

R



Be knowyn from other and what they be
For yf such costly thyngē were not made
work for pore peple coude never be hadde
And many folkē than shuld fall to Idylnes
whych is the moder of vyce and wretchednes

P
ye but I delyte noo such vanytēs worldly
I delyte nother in sloth nor gloteny
I dyg and delfe t̄ labour for my lybyng
Never ydyll but somewhat euer doyng
Dayly I ren and go bere swete t̄ swynk
Iete broun brede and drynk small drynk
Content w̄ cours meat what so euer it be
so it quench the hunger it sufflyst me

These poyntes I use whych I haue rehersyd now
Be not these gentyl condycyons I pray you

M
If thou use them nedē compellyth the thexto
For if thou coudist hardli thou wold other wise do

P
what I wold doo then ye can not tell
It is not to purpose but thys I wot well
Syth that I use my lyfe in such good maner
whyth such gentyll condycyons explyd here
More than ye both do stylly contynuyng
And syth that gentyll condycyons is the thyng
To make a gentylman the cause pryncypall
whezin I use my life most of vs all
who can by any reason deny than

R
But that I am of us all most gentylman
In seyth yf thou be gentylman therfore
Thou art a gentylman agaynt thy wyll full sore
Syth I se he stādyth in his own cōsait so well
That opynyon we shall never expell

M
From hym by no argument nor reason
Therfore now for a lytyll season

B
Let vs dept from hym I hold it best
Then we shall haue w̄ hym some rest

B
I agre thereto for caton sayth this
Contra verbolas noli cotendere verbis
Contend nor argu never in no matter

M
w̄ hym that is full of words and clatter
wherefore for a season let us both dept

B
I am agreed thereto w̄ all myn hart
why sirs than wyll ye dept t̄ be gon
ye that we wyll fazewel for a season

P
For to tary here lenger we see no grete cause

Then fare ye well as wylle as two dawys
And I pray god sende you such grace both twayn
To be stark cockeolde or ye come agayn
Now masters they be both gone awaþ
Therefore one worde now harke what I sey
wee see well now by playne expiencie
when a man is set in a wyllfull credens
All to fortesye hys owne oppynyon
If god hym selfe than wold wyth hym reason
In effect it shall no more auayle
Than w^e a whyp to dryfe a snayle
Cherfore no remedy is that I can see
For yuell men that be in auctorite
But let them alone tyll god wyll send
A tyme tyll our gouernours may intend
of all enormytes the reformacyon
And bring in theyr handis the rod of coreccyon
And the reformyng of iniurys them self see
And wyll say pycsely thus it shall be
For exortacions techyng and pchyng
Gestyng and raylyng they mend no thyng
For the amendment of the world is not in me
Nor all the grete arguments that we thre
Haue made syth we resonyd here to gedyr
Do not puayle the weyght of a fether
For the helpyng of any thyng that is amys
we can not help it then syth it so is
I wyll let the world wagg^t home wyll I goo
And dryf the plowgh as I was wont to do
And praye god send us peas I wyl no farr mell
Cherfore masters all now fare ye well

Hic miles I mercator iterum intrant

MNow by my troth I am glad that he is gon
And so am I by swete seynt John
I hard not a chorll thys leypn yere
Shew so curst reasons as he hath done here
For the mayntenaunce of hys oppynyon
yet he hys dysseupd for all hys reason
For it is necessary that ruleys be
To haue posseypsons to mayntayn theyr degré
And those few to dryfe the multytude all
of the other people to labour to fall
For yf the rulers drof them not thereto
The peple wold be ydyll^t no thyng doo

And most reason is that gouernaunce
Shuld come to such rulers by inherintaunce
Rather than to haue them chose by eleccyon
Oft tymys by drede mede and affeccyon
Men of euyll consciens that grete tyraunts be
Rede old cronyclys the proue ye shall see
And though they haue grete wyt and lernyng
Yet so proud they be therof they fere no thyng
Mother god nor man but euermore shyl
w^e out councell or aduyse folow theyr own wyll
But they that by inherintaunce rulers be
Though they haue no grete lernyng yet we see
yet makyngh them more ferefull & better cōtent
To folow wyls mens councell and aduyselement
And syth that yt hath ben so long cōtynnyd
Enherityours to haue rule and so long usyd
And that they haue ruled by as dyscreasyon
As the other that haue be chose by eleccyon
If that order of rule by successyon of blode
Shuld be dystroyd it shuld doo hurte & no good

M
That reason is so grete no man can debarr
Neuertheles that churlysh knaue that carter
After hys sond oppynyon thynkyth thus
Hymselfe more gentylman than us

R
And therin he lyeth for by expiens we see
That gentyll cōdycyons most comenly be
In them that be of noble blode borne
For take .xx. carters whych never were beforne
Aquayntyd let them be to gyder

Take .xx. straynege gentylmen in lyke maner
These churlysh carters I dare well say
wyll not agre to gyder skant one day
w^e out chydyng quarrelling or fyghtyng
yhone wyll stle from other and be pykyng
And stryfe whych of them at the skot shall pay leſt
And indeuer them who can play the knaue best
But these gentylmen I warant you wyll stury
who can shew to other most curteſy
And of theyr gentylnes wyll pfer to pay
For the other and shew what pleasurs they may
So touchyng gentylnes I say surely
Men of grete byrth bſe it most comynly
There can be no truer laying nor sentence
And the cause therof we see by expienc

B

For these pore wretches that haue no thyng
Must be nygards churlysh and spayryng
But gentylmen be taught to be lyberall
And so they may be for they haue where w^r all
And as touchyng noblenes that argument
Whych the plowman made late pupth euydenc
That gentylmen borne to land must nedys be
For suffycency of most noblyte
For belyde goddyns gyfts of grace & of nature
As wyt and bodely styrngh yet they be sure
Of other ryches as of land and rent
To auoyd nede so they be more suffycyent
of them self than other pore people doutles
Then yf nede of straunge helpe cause wrechydnes
And suffysauns be cause wrechydnes

M

A better reason no man can deuyle
And yet farther I thynk lykewyse
He that hath grete haboundance of ryches
May vse lyberalyte and gentylnes
And also it is euer necessary
That some lyfe in welth and some in mylery
And let churlyss bable and say what they wyll
Hit hath ben so euer and wyll be so styll
For it is almyghty goddyns purueaunce
wyse men of solys to haue the gouernance
And they that rule well I beseech Ihesu
Send them good lyfe & long to contynew
Amen.

The Philosopher

ye soferayns all dyscrete & excellent
Before whom thys dyalog shewyd hath be
Touchyng iii. poyns by wey of argument
First what is gentylnes & what noblyte
And who shulde be chose to hye auctorite
Thys quellyons they be so hye and sotell
Few dare plume to dysfyne them well

Cyet I thynk now vnder your coreccyons
The thyng that makyth a gentylman to be
ys but vertew & gentyl condycyons
whych aswell in pore men oft tymys we se
As in men of grete bryth oþ hye degré
And also vicious & churlysh cōdycyons
May be in men born to grete posseslyons
¶ And forther as touchyng noblypte
yet standyþ mych þt I thynk doutles
In suffycencye reason doth agre
But that suffysaunce makyng noblenes
Myst nedys be anexid vnto goodnes
For suffysauns is not the cause pryncypall
That god his noble but hys goodnes wþchall
¶ So vertue is ever the thyng pryncypall
That gentylnes & noblenes doth inslue
Then these hedys rulers & gouernours all
Shuld come thereto be cause of theyr vertue
And in auctoryte they ought not contynue
Except they be good men dyscrete & wyse
And haue a loue & zele vnto Justyce
¶ wherfore souereyns all that here present be
Now marke well these reasons here brought in
Both agayns men of hye & of low degré
For thys intent only to rebuke syn
For the best wry that is for one to be syn
To coþer the people by exortacyon
ys to pswade them by naturall reason
¶ For when that a man by hys owne reason
Juggyth hym selfe for to offend
That grudgyth his cōscyens & gyffyth cōpuncyon
In to hys herte to caule hym amend
But such blynd best that wyl not intend
To here no good councell nor reason
Dught by the law to haue sharp coreccyon
¶ But then yf the lawys be not suffycyent
whych haue be made & ordeynyd before
To gyfe ther fore cōdygne ponyshment
The pryncys & gouernours be bound euermore
To caule new lawys to be made therfore
And to put such men in auctoryte
That good men Just & indyfferent be
¶ But because that men of nature euermore
Be stapple & folowyng sensualyte

yt is impossyble in a maner therfore
For any gouernours that be in auctoryte
At all tymys Just & indyfferent to be
Except they be brydelyd & thereto compellyd
By some straute laws for them deuylsyd
¶ As thus that no man such come occupye
But certayn yerys & than to be remouyd
yet that whyle bound to attend dylygently
And yf he offend & surely prouyd
wyth out any fauour that he be ponyfyllyd
For the ponyfylment of a Juge or offyce
Doth more good than of thousand other
¶ And bnyll that such orders be deuylsyd
Sulchauncyall/ and put in execucion
Loke never to see the world amended
Nor of the gret my schefes the reformatiōn
But they that be bounde to see the thyngs done
I pray god of his grace put in thcyz myndys
To reforne shortly suche thynges amys
¶ And though that I my selfe now pcale
Thus myn oppynyon haue publyshyd
Or any of my felowes here in this place
In any poyn特 here haue vs abuled
We beseeche you to holde vs excused
And so the auctour hereof recquyret you all
And thus I comyt you to god eternall.

A M E P.
Johes rastell me fieri fecit

Cum priuilegio regali.



